

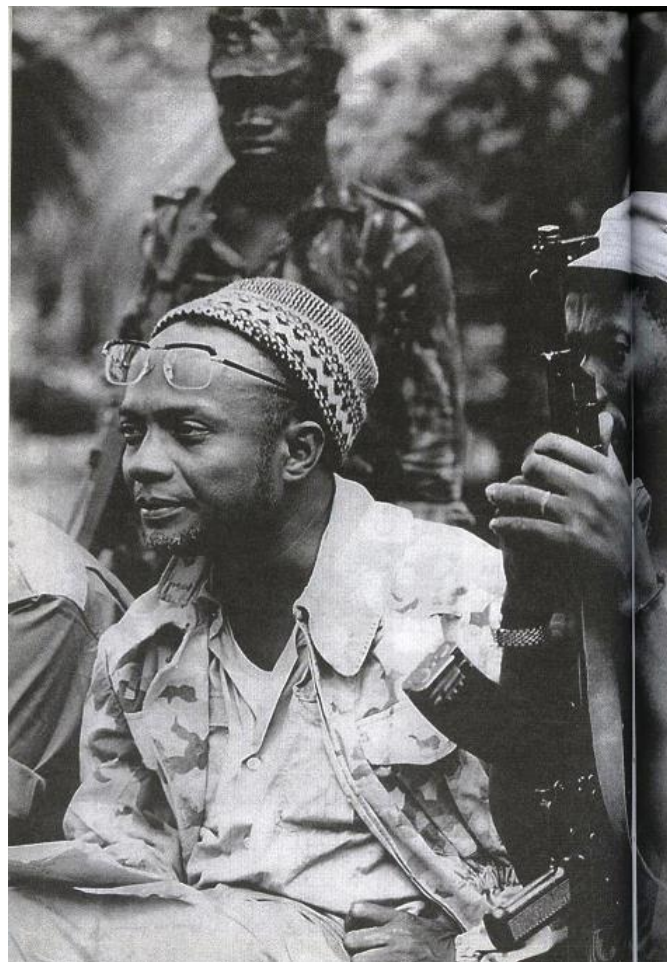


## Communist University Introductions

*These texts may be used as “openings to discussion” of the original reading texts that are supplied by the CU. They are not intended to be authoritative or conclusive. They are contributions to discussion like any other such contributions. The introductions are not a substitute for the reading texts.*

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### African Revolutionary Writers Course, Part 0, Introduction



[Amílcar Cabral, 1924 - 1973](#)

# Introduction: Weapon of Theory

Next week, the YCLSA Political Education Forum begins receiving a ten-part course on African Revolutionary Writers. This will be the first of four ten-week courses to be run through this e-mail channel in 2015.

As usual, the CU gives you original texts, attached to a short introduction or “opening to discussion”. You are welcome to reply to the CU postings, continuing the discussion, or adding your own new comments on the text.

As a suitable introduction to the new course, herewith **attached** please find Amilcar Cabral’s “Weapon of Theory”.

Cabral is the most profound and the most sublime of African Revolutionary writers. He is one of those Africans who contributed indispensable new lessons to the universal revolutionary legacy. “The Weapon of Theory” is relevant to our course as a whole, and to all our courses, for that matter. At a later stage in this course we will return to Amilcar Cabral and to the great single-volume compendium of his work called “Unity and Struggle”, recently republished in English in South Africa.

## The Weapon of Theory

The Tricontinental Conference of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America was held in Havana in January, 1966, 46 years after the Baku Conference of the Peoples of the East and seven years after the Cuban Revolution.

Forty-nine more years have passed since the Tricontinental. A lot has been achieved in that time, including our South African democratic breakthrough, almost twenty-one years ago, and the unbanning of the ANC and the SACP, twenty-five years ago.

The full defeat of Imperialism has not yet occurred. What we can say is that from early in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the historical agenda was set by the liberation movements, and that Imperialism represents the degeneration and the decline of bourgeois class power, and not its heyday.

The great political change in the world in the last century was the taking of sovereign independence by the formerly oppressed peoples of the former colonies, affecting the great majority of the population of the planet, and opening the road of democracy for them.

This gigantic movement and huge change was achieved with **the weapon of theory**.

In 2015, with direct Imperialist armed aggression still taking place on the continent of Africa it is, however, clear that the struggle continues.

In this connection we can note that Amilcar Cabral, in the speech to the Tricontinental that has always been known by the title *“The Weapon of Theory”*, said the following:

*“It is often said that national liberation is based on the right of every people to freely control its own destiny and that the objective of this liberation is national independence. Although we do not disagree with this vague and subjective way of expressing a complex reality, we prefer to be objective, since for us the basis of national liberation, whatever the formulas adopted on the level of international law, is the inalienable right of every people to have its own history, and the objective of national liberation is to regain this right usurped by imperialism, that is to say, to free the process of development of the national productive forces.*

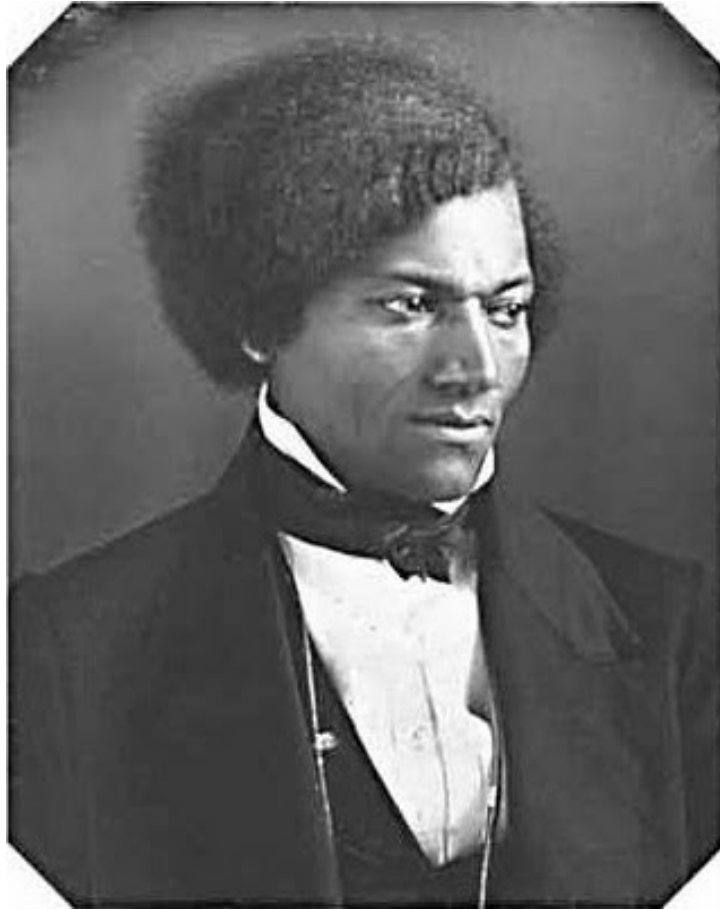
*“For this reason, in our opinion, any national liberation movement which does not take into consideration this basis and this objective may certainly struggle against imperialism, but will surely not be struggling for national liberation.*

*“This means that, bearing in mind the essential characteristics of the present world economy, as well as experiences already gained in the field of anti-imperialist struggle, the principal aspect of national liberation struggle is the struggle against neo-colonialism.”*

Amilcar Cabral was a true vanguardist. He was both a great leader, and a great intellectual.

The struggle against neo-colonialism continues.

- [The Weapon of Theory](#) (PDF download)
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[Frederick Douglass, 1818 - 1895](#)

## Frederick Douglass

This is the first main post of our series of African Revolutionary Writers. As a rule, you will receive four instalments in each weekly part, over ten weeks, with each instalment highlighting one revolutionary writer. These are your regular political education posts for the first quarter of 2015. They are distinguished from other posts by the background colour, and are also clearly marked as “African Revolutionary Writers”.

We begin with a giant: Frederick Douglass.

### **Context**

The first part of our ten-part series on African Revolutionary Writers covers the period from slavery to Imperialism. The Atlantic slave trade began when Portuguese ships passed Cape Bojador on the coast of present-day Western Sahara in 1434, bringing them south of the great desert for the first time.

They immediately took slaves. These, the first slaves of the bourgeoisie, were sold to Spanish colonists on the Canary Islands, where the original inhabitants (the [Guanches](#)) had already been enslaved *in situ* and worked to extinction. The triangular slave-trade pattern: Portugal – Africa – Canary Islands was soon afterwards scaled up to Britain – Africa – West Indies (or alternatively Brazil or North America). The Atlantic Trade took slaves across the ocean via the “Middle Passage” and brought sugar, tobacco, cotton and other plantation-grown commodities to Europe.

Christopher Columbus had crossed the Atlantic to the West Indies in 1492, and touched the continent of South America in 1498, the same year that Vasco da Gama reached India by the Cape sea route. By 1502 the trans-Atlantic slave trade was in full flow, first as a Portuguese monopoly, and later as a British monopoly.

Although Marx notes in “Capital” that capitalism began in the 1500s, yet for more than three centuries the dominant business of the Western European bourgeoisie was not capitalism, but the Atlantic slave trade, and the biggest operator in that business was Britain. This situation lasted until the capitalist “Industrial Revolution” of the late 1700s, also in Britain.

Only when the Western bourgeoisie made its turn towards capitalism did it become expedient for it to allow some blacks – released slaves – to create a literary *genre* known as the “slave narrative”, as part of the capitalist campaign to suppress slavery. This was done so as to make room for a new, more productive, exploited class: the wage-slaves or working proletariat.

An early example of the “slave narrative” *genre* is the work of [Olaudah Equiano](#), who wrote a book about his “[Interesting Life](#)” as a slave and then as a rescued slave, published in 1789. Such slave-narrative books tended not only to expose the evils of slavery, but also to praise Christianity and capitalism in equal measure, in order to flatter their sponsors and readers.

Frederick Douglass took the *genre* to a new level, transcended it, and left behind an incomparable and permanent liberatory resource.

### **Douglass**

[Frederick Douglass](#)’s work was exceptional for the breadth and the rebellious fearlessness of his rhetoric. Douglass broke free from the limits of the slave narrative *genre* so as to begin to create a truly revolutionary black literature. This is why our series begins with him.

After escaping by train from twenty years of slavery, Douglass wrote an extraordinary slave narrative called [My Bondage and My Freedom](#), first published in 1855. He included, in the same volume, a series of six transcripts of speeches or orations that he had given as a campaigner against slavery.

Slavery was abolished in the USA in 1865 at the end of the US Civil War, ten years after the publication of Frederick Douglass's book.

These six particular lectures of Douglass's are contained in one of the two attached documents. "What to the slave is the Fourth of July?" is a famous one, but they are all outstanding. This was an orator!

### **Power concedes nothing without a demand**

But the main reading, attached, is the most immortal of all of Frederick Douglass's speeches, known as **"If There Is No Struggle, There Is No Progress"** from 1857. It contains the famous sentence: **"Power concedes nothing without a demand."** If you read nothing else of Douglass's, do read this extraordinary piece of revolutionary literature, for the good advice that it gives: *power concedes nothing without a demand*.

The American Civil War of 1861-1865 was an armed conflict between one part of the bourgeoisie and another. It represented the real capitalist revolution in the USA, when the specifically capitalist bourgeoisie gained its dictatorship over the slaveholding part, and also over the new proletariat that it had created. In this way the US capitalist-bourgeois dictatorship, that still exists today, came into being.

For Africans, the global abolition of slavery was a relief after three centuries of terrible mass-scale atrocity. But the abolition of outright slavery also marked the beginning of wage slavery, and of military invasions, conquests, domination, plunder, settlement and colonialism, including a "scramble for Africa" in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, globalist neo-colonialism followed.

African political writing tracked all these changes. This week we look at the literature of the period of slavery and colonial expansion. In the next part, we will move into the literature of the post-WW2 era of decolonisation.

- **The above serves to introduce the original reading-text - [Frederick Douglass's 1857 "If There Is No Struggle, There Is No Progress"](#)**
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[François-Dominique Toussaint, 1743 - 1803](#)

## Toussaint L'Ouverture

Toussaint L'Ouverture – “Toussaint the Opening” – was the leader, both military and civilian, of the slave revolt in the French West Indian colony of “Saint Domingue”, which is now the Republic of Haiti.

Toussaint brought his country to the brink of independence. The constitution of which he was the author (download linked below), though not yet the constitution of an independent republic, was enough to lead to his capture, transportation to France, and death in captivity two years after its publication.

Toussaint's successor, [Dessalines](#), did achieve independence, though on harsh terms that crippled the country with “[reparations](#)” to the French Republic - one of the great scandals of history.

[C L R James](#) wrote a famous work about the Haitian revolution, calling the book “[The Black Jacobins](#)”. The title was a reference to the bourgeois take-over of the Great French Revolution that had taken place a few years earlier, the “Terror” under Robespierre, and the eventual bourgeois dictatorship that was the consequence of the French revolution, and therefore by extension, also the Haitian revolution.

In other words, the freed slaves became subordinated to a dictatorship of “their own” black bourgeoisie, of which Toussaint was one of the first. This was hardly surprising, and practically inevitable. The first dictatorship of the proletariat, the Paris Commune, was not seen until seventy years later, in 1871.

Even if a “Jacobin”, Toussaint was still an “Opening” in history, and one of the greatest of them all. Haiti was the first black colony to gain independence, and this was nearly one and a half centuries prior to the main wave of colonial independence that began following the anti-fascist war of 1939-1945.

The attached Haiti Constitution of 1801 is the best representation we have of Toussaint L’Ouverture’s writing.

- The above serves to introduce the original reading-text: [Toussaint, Haiti Constitution of 1801](#)

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#### African Revolutionary Writers, Part 1b



[Sol Plaatje, 1876 - 1932](#)



# Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje

Sol Plaatje was the first Secretary-General of the African National Congress. He was a journalist and a novelist, among other things.

Attached is one of the Chapters of Plaatje's "Native Life in South Africa" (1916). The full work can be found [here](#).

Sol Plaatje also wrote the epic novel "Mhudi", published in 1913. It does not appear to be on the Internet, but it does appear to be still available in hard copy.

- The above serves to introduce the original reading-text: [Sol Plaatje's 1916 "Native Life in South Africa" \(Wrong Carries the Day\)](#).
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## African Revolutionary Writers, Part 1c



[George Padmore, 1903 - 1959](#)

# George Padmore

[George Padmore](#) was born in Trinidad, in the West Indies. After studying in the USA he spent four or five years, from 1929, based in the Soviet Union, heading the Negro Bureau of the Communist International of Labour Unions (a.k.a. Profintern, or RILU). This organisation held a [First International Conference of Negro Workers](#) in Hamburg, Germany on July 7-8, 1930. South Africans W Thibedi and Moses Kotane were elected to the Executive Committee of the organisation at this conference. In London from 1934, Padmore teamed up with his contemporary and fellow-Trinidadian [C L R James](#), forming the International African Services Bureau.

Padmore organised the [5<sup>th</sup> Pan-African Congress](#), in Manchester, England, in 1945. This famous Congress was also attended by Kwame Nkrumah, W E B Du Bois, and Jomo Kenyatta, among others, including a young white man called Norman Atkinson, who later became a Labour member of the British Parliament.

After Ghanaian independence in 1957, Padmore moved there to serve under Nkrumah, but died in 1959. There is a web site dedicated to Padmore, [here](#), and there is a section within the Marxists Internet Archive for Padmore, [here](#).

Apart from the texts that we have of Padmore's - such as in the attached document - for the purposes of this course Padmore's story can serve to show that the many National Democratic Revolutions that subsequently took place in Africa had common, inter-twining roots, and those roots were not far from the Great October Revolution in Russia in 1917, the founding of the Communist International (Comintern) in 1919, and the founding of the Communist Party of South Africa in 1921.

As usual, the best remedy for the varying and contradictory interpretations that can be found, of the life of a revolutionary like Padmore, is to read the person's own work. The downloadable selection given here contains work written in Padmore's Profintern days, and also during the Anti-Fascist War when he was in Britain, anticipating the "dollar imperialism" that would follow that conflict.

Padmore brings us from the time of Sol Plaatje through the 1920s and 1930s to the war years and into the great post-war season of national liberation of colonies all over the world.

- The above serves to introduce the original reading-text: [Selections from the writings of George Padmore](#).



[Dr W. E. B. Du Bois, 1868-1963](#)

## W. E. B. Du Bois

Dr W. E. B. Du Bois is a legend. How much is owed to this man's life's work is impossible to over-estimate. He began his political career in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and went on through the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, eventually dying in independent Ghana, where he had gone to serve the revolution, although well into his 90s by that time.

Yet in spite of his eminence and the great amount that he wrote, it has been extremely difficult to find original documents of Du Bois' on the Internet, especially documents that coincide with his leadership, together with Paul Robeson, of the [Council on African Affairs](#). This organisation was based in New York, following the anti-fascist war of 1939-1945, at the time when the independence of African countries started to get under way. The first was Libya, on 24 December 1951.

Eventually a friend in New York sent the two rare documents that can be downloaded via the link below. They demonstrate the very broad consciousness that Du Bois had, and his tremendous sense of history and of historical time.

The 1946 letter to the New York Times is evidence of the unique leadership that Du Bois gave on the national and colonial question, while the article on M. K. Gandhi shows his great understanding of all the difficulties.

Du Bois is also particularly famous for his role as an organiser and participant in several of the five [Pan-African Conferences](#), especially the last effective one, in Manchester in 1945.

- The above serves to introduce the original reading-text: [W. E. B. Du Bois, Two Pieces of His Writing, 1946 and 1956.](#)
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#### African Revolutionary Writers, Part 2a



[Paul Robeson, 1898-1976](#)

## Paul Robeson

Paul Robeson was the Chairman of the [Council on African Affairs](#), an organisation based in New York from 1937 until it was shut down by McCarthyism in 1955. [W. E. B. Du Bois](#) was vice-chair.

The Council on African Affairs was a vital link between the struggles of the African-Americans of the Americas, and the National Democratic Revolutions that were getting under way in those years, in Africa.

In the Council on African Affairs can be seen the historical as well as the theoretical unity between the descendents of the slaves that had been taken from Africa, and the people struggling for freedom from colonialism in Africa itself. The connection with the South African liberation struggle was direct, via Mr E. S. Reddy and Dr Yusuf Dadoo, among others.

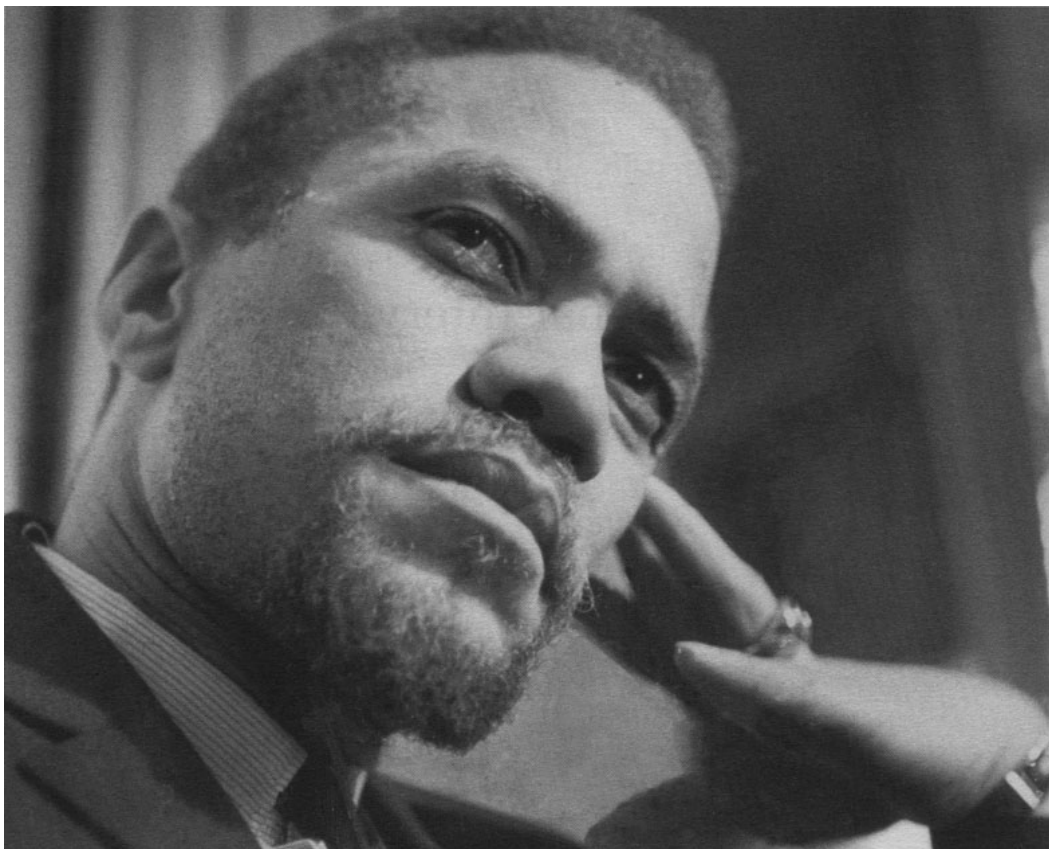
It was a two-way street. Sometimes the African-American (and Afro-Caribbean) leadership was in front, and at other times the African example was to an extent impelling the trans-Atlantic struggles. This is the main reason why this body of literature, called “African Revolutionary Writers” does, and must of necessity, include many African writers from across the sea.

Paul Robeson himself was an extraordinary man who achieved excellence in many fields, including sport and scholarship, before becoming a star of the theatre and the cinema, and becoming a performing, recording and broadcasting artist as a singer.

The attached document can give a good idea of who Paul Robeson was and the role that he played in the liberation struggle, as well as among the people of the United States of America.

- The above serves to introduce the original reading-text: [Excerpts from “Paul Robeson Speaks”, 1953.](#)
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#### African Revolutionary Writers, Part 2b



[Malcolm X, 1925-1965](#)



# Malcolm X

In this speech (“By Any Means Necessary”, attached), Malcolm X recalls the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and how inspiring it was to him. The speech goes on:

*“So we have formed an organization known as the Organization of Afro-American Unity which has the same aim and objective-to fight whoever gets in our way, to bring about the complete independence of people of African descent here in the Western Hemisphere, and first here in the United States, and bring about the freedom of these people by any means necessary.*

*“That's our motto. We want freedom by any means necessary. We want justice by any means necessary. We want equality by any means necessary.”*

The phrase “by any means necessary” is repeated throughout the speech, and it ends:

*“We declare our right on this earth to be a man, to be a human being, to be respected as a human being, to be given the rights of a human being in this society, on this earth, in this day, which we intend to bring into existence by any means necessary.”*

Other speeches of Malcolm X include (these are links to PDF downloads): “[The Ballot or the Bullet](#)”; “[Message to the Grassroots](#)”; and “[Confronting White Oppression](#)”. You can also find videos of Malcolm X on YouTube, and MP3 files of his speeches.

Malcolm X, a great revolutionary leader of his people, and an inspiring orator, (Barack Obama tries to fake Malcolm X’s style) was gunned down in 1965.

Reading these speeches confirms the close and active relationship that remained between the struggling masses in Africa and in America.

- **The above serves to introduce the original reading-text: [Excerpts from the Speech Founding the OAAU, Malcolm X, 28 June 1964.](#)**
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[Martin Luther King, 1929-1968](#)

## Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The attached “Beyond Vietnam” (download linked below) speech of the late [Rev Martin Luther King Junior](#), is a classic.

Nowadays it has become commonplace to refer to “international solidarity” as if it is both a narrow idea, and also a universal one. But this concept that we have received, and then stripped of its particularity, does actually have a tremendous and specific history whose meaning is not fully conveyed by the mere formula-phrase, “international solidarity”.

The anti-Imperialist struggle and the democratic struggle can and should be one. It is not a matter of charity of the rich to the poor. It is also not solely a matter of good-hearted and exceptional individuals. But there have indeed been such individuals, and there will be again. Martin Luther King was such a person.

What Martin Luther King describes, and justifies, is: “why I believe that the path from Dexter Avenue Baptist Church - the church in Montgomery, Alabama, where I began my pastorate - leads clearly to this sanctuary tonight.”

In other words, MLK at the meeting of the “Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam” in April, 1967, was preaching the intrinsic, organic unity of the struggle of the common people everywhere. It is not an artificial altruism but it is a unity of purpose, in concerted action against the single enemy – monopoly capitalist Imperialism – and it involves personalities, and actual events, and places.

Further than his literal message, there is also the extraordinary power and style of MLK’s oration. In September 1917, just prior to the Great October Russian Revolution that he led, Lenin spoke of “[insurrection as an art](#)”. It is an art that goes beyond the military, and encompasses all of our activities. Therefore when reading such a piece, one should regard them as a source of learning of the art of advocacy, which is part of the art of leadership, and essential to the art of insurrection.

Exactly one year after making this speech, King was gunned down by an assassin in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had gone to show solidarity for [workers who were on strike there](#).

**Picture:** Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior, at the White House, Washington DC, USA

- The above serves to introduce the original reading-text: [Martin Luther King, Beyond Vietnam, Time to Break Silence, 1967](#).

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### African Revolutionary Writers, Part 3



[Patrice Lumumba, 1925 - 1961](#)

# Patrice Lumumba

This third part of our African Revolutionary Writers' Series is dedicated to the "Uhuru Years" that followed the 1960 "Year of Africa", when sixteen countries took their independence. In this instalment we feature Patrice Lumumba's short, powerful, historic [Independence Day speech of 30 June 1960](#) (attached).

In the Western Imperialist literature the independence of all of these countries has been recorded as a "granting" (e.g. thus: "Congo was granted independence by Belgium"). This contradictory view of what happened during the greatest worldwide political change in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century - the National Democratic Revolutions in the former colonial countries - mirrors the theme of Frederick Douglass's most famous speech, (["If there is no Struggle, there is no Progress"](#)) where Douglass says that **"power concedes nothing without a demand"**.

Lumumba's speech is still famous for making the same point, and particularly because he made the speech in the presence of the monarch of the colonial power, King Baudouin of Belgium (grandson of the original colonist and butcher King Leopold). Baudouin had already spoken in a paternalistic and euphemistic manner at an earlier stage during the same event.

Lumumba at once spoke of struggle, and of victory, and he spoke frankly of the vicious colonialism which had been overcome by that struggle.

Congo at that time was on a par with South Africa as a wealthy, quickly-modernising African country. The subsequent history of the Congo has been a tragedy of neo-colonialism, including the martyrdom of Patrice Lumumba in the following year, 1961, and the imposition of the stooge dictator Mobutu who ruled until the 1990s.

It is absurd to suggest, as some Imperialist writers continue to do, that the neo-colonial reaction was Lumumba's fault for being cheeky in front of the Belgian king. No-one must be allowed to forget that these words of Lumumba's expressed the historical truth, as well as the feelings of millions of Africans at the time, and that these words needed to be said and had to be said, so that they can now be remembered and glorified again in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century while Africa gains its "second independence" born out of the struggle against neo-colonialism and Imperialism.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Patrice Lumumba, Congo Independence Day Speech, 30 June 1960](#).



Frantz Fanon, 1925 - 1961

## Frantz Fanon

The extraordinary co-incidence of dates of both birth and death as between **Frantz Fanon** and **Patrice Lumumba**, both born in 1925 and both deceased in 1961, highlights the precociousness of Fanon's critique of the post-colonial regimes which had so recently, from his standpoint, come into existence. Please read the essay "Pitfalls of National Consciousness", attached.

This essay was published in the book "The Wretched of the Earth" in French in 1961 and in English translation in 1963. The title of the book is a direct quotation from the song, the "[Internationale](#)", written by Eugene Pottier during the Paris Commune of 1871, the lyrics of which in the original French begin: "Debout, Les Damnés de la Terre!" Les Damnés de la Terre became the title of Fanon's book and was well translated into English as "The Wretched of the Earth" – a phrase since then embraced by generations of militants.

Fanon is so intelligent, and so witty, that it is easy to be charmed by him to such an extent that critical faculties are put aside. So much of what he wrote nearly fifty years ago has come to pass, not once, but repeatedly, and not in one, but in many countries, that one has to be astonished.



No other writer on this topic has come close to the range and the brilliance that Fanon exhibits with such apparent ease in this essay. To find literary comparisons one has to go far back, to the likes of [Voltaire](#) and [Jonathan Swift](#).

Fanon is particularly emphatic here in his denunciation of the national bourgeoisie in the circumstances of the newly independent country. Among other things he says:

*“In its beginnings, the national bourgeoisie of the colonial countries identifies itself with the decadence of the bourgeoisie of the West. We need not think that it is jumping ahead; it is in fact beginning at the end. It is already senile before it has come to know the petulance, the fearlessness or the will to succeed of youth.”*

Is Fanon right? In South Africa, we certainly have problems of “tenderpreneurs”, “narrow BEE”, corruption and many other manifestations of the premature degeneration of the bourgeoisie, similar to Fanon’s descriptions.

But we also have a theory and practice of National Democratic Revolution involving Unity-in-Action between classes, particularly between the working class and the national bourgeoisie. We have found this class alliance to be indispensable. Fanon did not have this theory.

This document is a great classic and is typical of the best of African Revolutionary Writing.

But it is not a Bible.

- **The above is to introduce the original reading-text: Frantz Fanon, Pitfalls of National Consciousness, 1963, [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#).**
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[Albert Luthuli, 1898 - 1967](#)

## Albert Luthuli

[Chief Albert Luthuli](#) was President-General of the African National Congress from 1952 until his death in 1967. In 1960, the year of the Sharpeville massacre, Luthuli was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Our sample of his work is his Peace Prize lecture, delivered in Stockholm, Sweden (**attached**).

This speech fits in well with our course. It followed the first batch of African independence-struggle victories after the World War of 1939-45. In the same year of 1960, 16 African countries achieved independence.

We have already seen material from Paul Robeson and W E B Du Bois, helping us to recall the worldwide uprising of internationalist political will for the end of direct colonialism, which was to a large extent a consequence of the victorious Anti-Fascist World War. Luthuli's speech shows his consciousness of this internationalism, of which the awarding of his Peace Prize was one expression.

Note that Luthuli's speech accepting the Peace Prize is not a pacifist speech. It does not condemn armed struggle, but on the contrary, justifies it. Here are some relevant paragraphs from the speech:

*"This award could not be for me alone, nor for just South Africa, but for Africa as a whole. Africa presently is most deeply torn with strife and most bitterly stricken with racial conflict. How strange then it is that a man of Africa should be here to receive an award given for service to the cause of peace and brotherhood between men. There has been little peace in Africa in our time. From the northernmost end of our continent, where war has raged for seven years, to the centre and to the south there are battles being fought out, some with arms, some without. In my own country, in the year 1960, for which this award is given, there was a state of emergency for many months. **At Sharpeville, a small village, in a single afternoon sixty-nine people were shot dead** and 180 wounded by small arms fire; and in parts like the Transkei, a state of emergency is still continuing. Ours is a continent in revolution against oppression. And peace and revolution make uneasy bedfellows. There can be no peace until the forces of oppression are overthrown.*

*"Our continent has been carved up by the great powers; **alien governments have been forced upon the African people by military conquest and by economic domination**; strivings for nationhood and national dignity have been beaten down by force; traditional economics and ancient customs have been disrupted, and human skills and energy have been harnessed for the advantage of our conquerors. In these times there has been no peace; there could be no brotherhood between men.*

*"But now, the revolutionary stirrings of our continent are setting the past aside. Our people everywhere from north to south of the continent are reclaiming their land, their right to participate in government, their dignity as men, their nationhood. Thus, **in the turmoil of revolution, the basis for peace and brotherhood in Africa is being restored by the resurrection of national sovereignty and independence**, of equality and the dignity of man.*

*"It should not be difficult for you here in Europe to appreciate this. Your continent passed through a longer series of **revolutionary upheavals**, in which your age of feudal backwardness gave way to the new age of industrialization, true nationhood, democracy, and rising living standards - the golden age for which men have striven for generations. Your age of revolution, stretching across all the years from the eighteenth century to our own, encompassed some of the bloodiest civil wars in all history. By comparison, the African revolution has swept across three quarters of the continent in less than a decade; its final completion is within sight of our own generation...*

*“Perhaps, by your standards, our surge to revolutionary reforms is late. If it is so - if we are late in joining the modern age of social enlightenment, late in gaining self-rule, independence, and democracy, it is because in the past the pace has not been set by us. Europe set the pattern for the nineteenth and twentieth-century development of Africa. Only now is our continent coming into its own and **recapturing its own fate from foreign rule.***

*“Though I speak of Africa as a single entity, it is divided in many ways by race, language, history, and custom; by political, economic, and ethnic frontiers. But in truth, despite these multiple divisions, Africa has a single common purpose and a single goal - the achievement of its own independence. All Africa, both lands which have won their political victories but have still to overcome the legacy of economic backwardness, and lands like my own whose political battles have still to be waged to their conclusion - all Africa has this single aim: **our goal is a united Africa** in which the standards of life and liberty are constantly expanding; in which the ancient legacy of illiteracy and disease is swept aside; in which the dignity of man is rescued from beneath the heels of colonialism which have trampled it. This goal, pursued by millions of our people with revolutionary zeal, by means of books, representations, demonstrations, and **in some places armed force** provoked by the adamancy of white rule, **carries the only real promise of peace** in Africa. Whatever means have been used, the efforts have gone to end alien rule and race oppression.”*

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Africa and Freedom, Albert Luthuli, Nobel Peace Prize Lecture, 1960.](#)
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[Ahmed Sékou Touré, 1922 - 1984](#)

## Ahmed Sékou Touré

Before becoming President of Guinea at independence in 1958 – a position he held until his death in 1984 – Ahmed Sékou Touré led a trade union federation.

At an early stage in his presidency, Sékou Touré led his country to vote against the neo-colonial arrangement known as the “French Community”. Guinea was the only one of many former French African colonies to vote against.

This refusal of neo-colonialism was the heroic act for which Sékou Touré has never been forgotten, or in the case of the French imperialists, forgiven.

Later, Sékou Touré became well-known as one of the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement. Guinea attracted personalities including the exiled South African singer [Miriam Makeba](#), who became Guinea’s ambassador to the United Nations, and her then husband the US Black Power leader [Stokely Carmichael](#), who changed his name to Kwame Ture.

Yet in spite of the celebrity he enjoyed in his lifetime, there is surprisingly little of Sékou Touré’s legacy visible on the Internet today. Likewise in hard copy, his output has been difficult to find. A 1979 book of Sékou Touré’s called “Africa on the Move”, published in English, was finally located in a library. From it the quotation in the **attached** document was extracted.



Sékou Touré's posthumous opponents have been busier than his supporters, so that there is plenty of off-hand denigration of the man to be found, and also plain confusion, as in the current Wikipedia entry, for example.

But there may be other reasons why this man's memory is now so obscure. He left many volumes of speeches, in hard copy, in French. He was keen to leave a legacy. So why has this one-time giant of African politics, formerly a household name all over the world, shrunk so much in terms of reputation?

His own book, "Africa on the Move", gives clues as to why this might be so. It is more than 600 pages long, yet it reads like the conference report of the general secretary of a trade union federation. It is the kind of document that has the same predictable headings and the same voluminous narrative time after time, as if it was the "matters arising" of an on-going series of unresolved meetings. "Africa Going Round in Circles" might have been a better title for this book.

Judge it for yourself from the quoted part, **attached**. It is clear, at least, that Sékou Touré based his output on "common sense", and on such touchstones as "efficiency", "responsibility" and other presumed universal values that constantly crop up in his text. Frankly, it is quite dull and boring. Sékou Touré, contrary to what one might expect after his heroic stand against neo-colonialism in 1958, turns out to be a "neutralist" (his word). His politics are *ad hoc* and appear personal, but are actually made up of the commonplace platitudes that capitalism holds out in front of itself, to cover itself.

Like a typical reformist trade unionist, Sékou Touré rejects the wickedness of capitalism but takes all of capitalism's lip-service to morality at face value. He never escapes from the ideology of the bourgeois ruling class.

Sékou Touré never mentions any other politician, contemporary or historical. It is not lack of knowledge or mental capacity that renders his work so unscholarly, but the absence of any correspondence with other thinkers. Perhaps this is evidence of simple vanity (simple, but vast). If so, this would also partly explain the lack of defenders for the memory of a man who quite possibly bored his fellow-Guineans terribly, for the entire 26 years of an egocentric presidency.

For this series, we have sought out the original words of revolutionaries, including Sékou Touré's. But contrary to our own CU practice, we find that Touré shunned the works of others. He ignores them all. His inclusion in our series therefore stands as an example to show that there are those who hold themselves apart from history,

and to whom history consequently tends to return the same kind of compliment: neglect. We include him anyway, and allow his supporters to defend him if they will.

In a part of the book not quoted here, Sékou Touré relates how his party (the PDG) is the one in a one-party state. He says that the one-party rule was brought in for the sake of “efficiency”. Then he says that subsequent to this original act, he has heard of something called National Democracy which he regards as the same thing as the one-party state. Sékou Touré saw something called NDR, but missed the democracy in it.

Sad to say, Sékou Touré missed the point.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Ahmed Sékou Touré, Africa’s Future and the World, 1979.](#)

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#### African Revolutionary Writers, Part 4



[Eduardo Mondlane, 1920-1969](#)

## Eduardo Mondlane

The **attached** text, given for reading as the main document of this fourth part of the African Revolutionary Writers series, is Chapter 5 from Eduardo Mondlane’s 1969

book, “The Struggle for Mozambique”. The chapter is called “Resistance – the search for a national movement”. It is the part of the book where Mondlane relates the foundation of the united liberation movement, FRELIMO.

The creation of FRELIMO – the movement that in 1975 achieved victory over the Portuguese colonialists in Mozambique – owed a lot to Mondlane’s work. Yet a large proportion of this remarkable chapter is devoted, not to political manoeuvres and negotiations, but to the cultural and intellectual origins of Mozambican national consciousness, some of them quite small. It is evidence of the high degree of importance that this great revolutionary, Eduardo Mondlane, placed upon all kinds of intellectual artefacts, and not just literature.

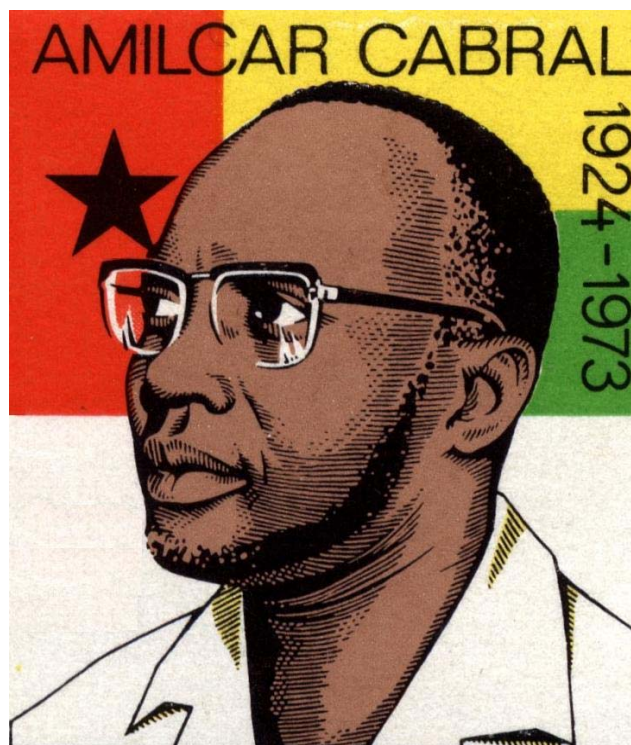
The place of intellectual output in revolutionary processes is part of “the point” of this African Revolutionary Writers series. It is notable that in this part, which includes three great Lusophone revolutionaries, Mondlane, Cabral and Neto, and one, Ruth First, who devoted the last years of her life to Mozambique (where she was assassinated by a South African apartheid-regime letter-bomb) they all give us strong cause to think how “*to unite political militancy and intellectual work*” and make intellectual work “*an instrument of the revolution*”. These quoted words are from a note by Aquino de Bragança, Director of the Centre of African Studies where Ruth First was working when she was killed by the South African bomb.

Mondlane, too was assassinated, as was Amilcar Cabral. Mondlane’s successor Samora Machel was also killed, in the contrived downing of the aircraft he was in. Aquino de Bragança also died in that crash.

Mondlane relates that in Mueda, Mozambique, on 16 June 1960, over 500 people were shot down by the Portuguese. This was in the same year as the infamous Sharpeville massacre in neighbouring South Africa. The Mueda massacre, he writes, propelled increased numbers of Mozambicans into the armed struggle. Yet this event is hardly spoken of or written about in the English language.

The rediscovery of the texts used in this series was difficult, and took many months. No suitable text has yet been found to represent the thinking of Samora Machel in this series. Such texts of Samora Machel do exist – the references in books such as Barry Munslow’s “Mozambique: the Revolution and its Origins” are good evidence of their existence – but they are in Portuguese.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Eduardo Mondlane, The Struggle for Mozambique, 1969.](#)



[Amilcar Cabral, 1924 - 1973](#)

## Amilcar Cabral

The text for this week (**attached**) is Amilcar Cabral's speech on [National Liberation and Culture](#). This speech was originally delivered on February 20, 1970, as part of the Eduardo Mondlane Memorial Lecture Series at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York. That is more than forty years ago, yet the speech is as fresh and as relevant as if it had been written yesterday, and based on appraisal of our present circumstances. Foreign domination:

*"can be maintained only by the permanent, organized repression of the cultural life of the people concerned,"* wrote Cabral. Attempted assimilation is *"a more or less violent attempt to deny the culture of the people in question."* It does not work. In fact there are no ways in which the coloniser can succeed.

*"...it is generally within the culture that we find the seed of opposition, which leads to the structuring and development of the liberation movement,"* says Cabral.

*"...national liberation takes place when, and only when, national productive forces are completely free of all kinds of foreign domination. The liberation of productive forces and consequently the ability to determine the mode of*

*production most appropriate to the evolution of the liberated people necessarily opens up new prospects for the cultural development of the society in question, by returning to that society all its capacity to create progress,”* says Cabral.

Cabral develops the idea that “...we must take into account the fact that, faced with the prospect of political independence, the ambition and opportunism from which the liberation movement generally suffers may bring into the struggle unconverted individuals. The latter, on the basis of their level of schooling, their scientific or technical knowledge, but without losing any of their social class biases, may attain the highest positions in the liberation movement,” he warns.

Cabral concludes

*“...the liberation struggle is, above all, a struggle both for the preservation and survival of the cultural values of the people and for the harmonization and development of these values within a national framework.”*

In Portuguese: *A luta continua!*

Cabral’s “[The Weapon of Theory](#)” was used in the introductory part of this course.

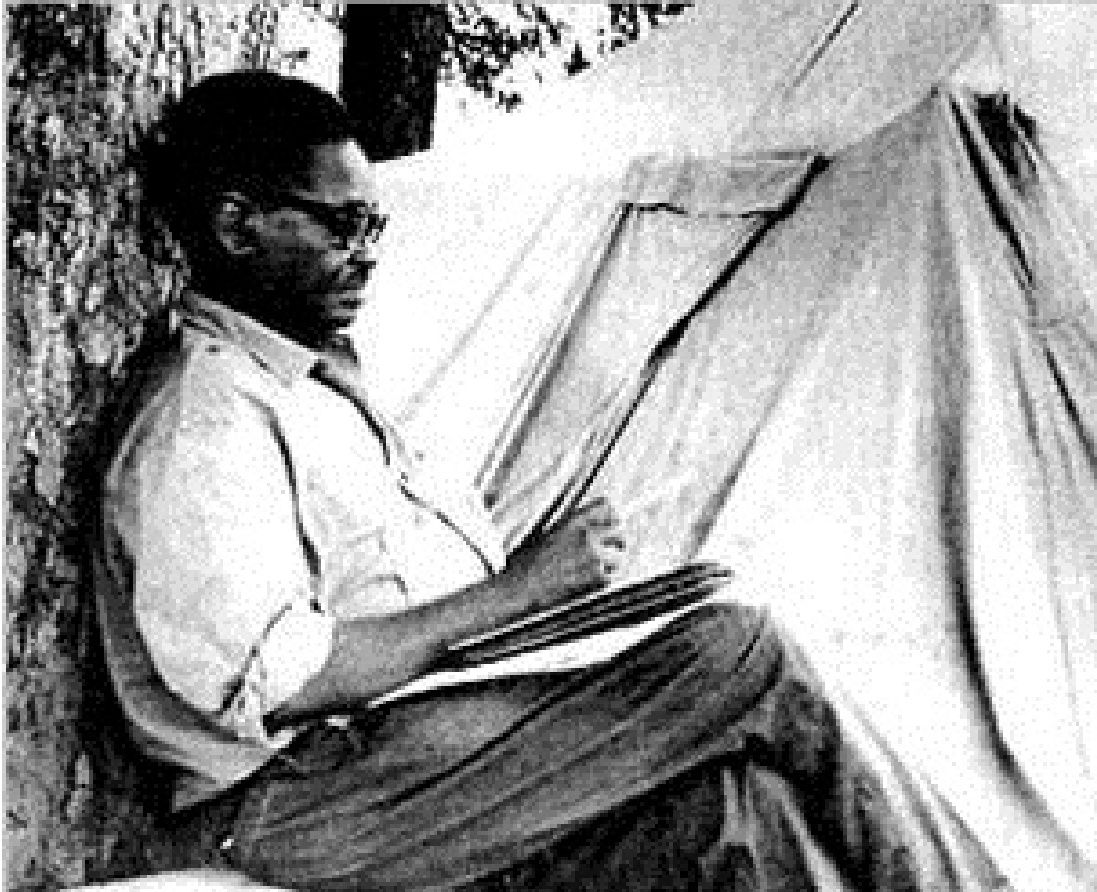
The importance that this outstanding revolutionary Amílcar Cabral placed on cultural and intellectual output is plain to see. The Mozambican scholar **Aquino de Bragança**, colleague of another intellectual (and like Cabral, martyr) Ruth First, called intellectual work “an instrument of the revolution”. It is the ground upon which the revolution stands.

Aquino de Bragança was himself killed in the 19 October 1986 air crash in which President Samora Machel also died, thirteen years after the murder of Amílcar Cabral.

We are not yet safe enough to think that the killing of political intellectuals and political cadres is a thing of the past, or that attempts at “*organized repression of the cultural life of the people*” have ceased.

At least 13 of our revolutionary writers were violently killed. One of them was killed since the course was first given, and now. The revolution must strive to make the murdered heroes live again through their writings.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Amílcar Cabral, National Liberation and Culture, 1970](#).



[Agostinho Neto, 1922-1979](#)

## Agostinho Neto

Agostinho Neto, the first President of MPLA, and the first President of the independent republic of Angola, was a great writer - a poet - as well as a great revolutionary leader.

The **attached** document, also linked below, is as good an example as could be found of how, through radio, speech, and eventually through the translation and compilation of the same into a pamphlet by the solidarity movement, the kinds of words which held the liberation movement together, and also publicised it, were made and multiplied.

Now, in 2015, it may be thought that the propagation of such words was easy in those days, or automatic. Nothing could be further from the truth. The liberation movements were outsiders. Their supporters in other countries, whom Neto here mentions and acknowledges, were few, and were not in the “mainstream”. The countries which now parade as “the international community”, as “NATO”, the



“ICC”, and in other guises - in other words the governments of the metropolitan Imperialist countries - in those days were solidly and openly supporting colonialism. Portugal, for example, was then (and has never since ceased to be) a conspicuous member of NATO, which is actually the armed wing of imperialism.

In these particular writings Agostinho Neto does not, as the writings of Mondlane and Cabral that we have quoted did, reflect explicitly on the place of intellectual work in the national democratic revolution.

Instead, this set of three items, presented together as a pamphlet, directly exemplifies such intellectual work in practice.

It is hard not to be moved by these words even after the passage of more than 40 years. They still have the immediacy and the urgency that they had when they were spoken by Agostinho Neto and when they were heard by the three different audiences to which they were addressed.

These words carry truths and lessons that still need to be learned, and re-learned.

In a different mood, some of Agostinho Neto’s poems, translated into English, can be read if you [click here](#).

- **The above is to introduce the original reading-text: Agostinho Neto, Messages to Companions in the Struggle, 1972, [Part 1](#), and [Part 2](#).**
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[Ruth First, 1925-1982](#)

## Ruth First

Ruth First was a revolutionary leader, in her own right, of the Young Communist League of South Africa, of the Communist Party of South Africa before it was banned in 1950, of the Congress of Democrats, in all the campaigns of the 1950s, and in the clandestine South African Communist Party, before and after being forced into exile in the 1960s.

Ruth First was a lifelong militant of South Africa's liberation movement, and a martyr to its cause. But Ruth First also wrote seriously and profoundly about other countries than her own and about the African countries in general from the point of view of a scholar, a teacher and a journalist.

Aquino de Bragança, the Director of the Centre of African Studies where Ruth First had been co-Director at the time she was slain by the South African bomb, wrote after her death of "her personal struggle to unite political militancy and intellectual work". It is clear that she excelled in both ways.

Revolutionary leaders need to be readers, and also to be writers. Ruth First's work shows why.

Of the two attached and linked items, the chapter from Ruth First's book "Black Gold" called "Workers or Peasants?" is the one that relates to Mozambique. Ruth First's work in other countries was not unrelated to the South African struggle. This particular summary reveals in a way that becomes shocking, the awful effect of South Africa's predatory relationship with Mozambique on that country as a whole, and on the migrant labourers and their families in particular.

Ruth First draws some conclusions, which might at this stage be challenged, concerning the co-operatisation of rural Mozambique as a component of socialism, or more broadly, of “development”.

It might be that a better course of action would have been to simply guarantee a market to the peasants, and then to let them organise themselves within that secure market environment, whether through co-operatives or in diverse other ways. In other words, there may have been more than the two ways to go that Ruth First describes in her concluding paragraphs. Read the piece to see what is meant here.

In the chapter, “The Limits of Nationalism”, from Ruth First’s book on Libya, what is described most clearly is the class dynamic of a state that rests upon the support of the petty bourgeoisie (or “petite bourgeoisie” as First tends to call it). This is a class that typically expanded very quickly after the independence of African countries, First says. It is a class that wants to do everything according to its spontaneous, common-sense bourgeois lights. First describes how in Libya, previously existing organisations were disbanded, to be replaced by new ones created from the top down.

There are aspects of this very fine piece of writing that may apply to South Africa today, and which also to some extent explain both the strength and the weakness of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya of the late Muammar Gaddafi, still in evidence today after the intervention and bombing of Libya by NATO, the sword of the “international community” (i.e., of Imperialism).

Other books by Ruth First include “**South West Africa**”, 1963; “**117 Days**”, 1965; “**The Barrel of a Gun: political power in Africa and the coup d'état**”, 1970; “**Portugal's Wars in Africa**”, 1971; “**The South African Connection**”, 1972 (with Jonathan Steele and Christabel Gurney); and “**Olive Schreiner**”, 1980 (with Ann Scott). Earlier, Ruth First had worked for the Guardian/New Age newspaper, under the editorship of Brian Bunting.

Ruth First’s own archive of her work is available for viewing on microfilm at the Historical Papers Archive, located in the William Cullen Library at Wits University, Johannesburg. The web site of this public institution is at <http://www.historicalpapers.wits.ac.za/>.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-texts: [Ruth First, Workers or Peasants? 1983](#), and [Ruth First, Libya - the Elusive Revolution, 1974](#).



Moses Kotane, 1905 - 1978

## Moses Kotane

The African National Congress of South Africa is sometimes called “Africa’s Oldest Liberation Movement”. In this limited series we are not attempting a comprehensive sampling of the abundant South African revolutionary writing. But in this part we will look at four South African revolutionary writers, together.

Starting with Moses Kotane, we go on to Govan Mbeki, Oliver Tambo and “Comrade Mzala” (Jabulani Nxumalo). The first is a letter, the next is a book chapter, the third a radio broadcast script, or transcript, and the fourth is an article for the ANC publication “Sechaba”.

It is a mistake to think that Kotane’s famous “Cradock Letter” (attached; download linked below) was the origin of the Africanisation of the Communist Party of South Africa. The well-known Black Republic Thesis, imposed on the South African Party by the Comintern, was far earlier in time (1927-1928). From soon after its founding in 1921 the CPSA had been a majority-black Party, though this was not always reflected in the top leadership, and especially not in the beginning.

But Kotane’s plain and direct 1934 letter does perhaps mark a real turning point, because of the impact that it had; because of the consequences. Kotane became General Secretary of the Party in 1939, and then of the SACP, and remained in that office until his death in 1978. He was also Treasure-General of the ANC for several years.

Kotane worked hard to make the Alliance between the Party and the ANC a solid and permanent one, and his name is historically associated with the Party's approach to the National Question, which has been so influential in South African history up to the present time.

Here is Kotane's even shorter summary of his short letter from Cradock:

*"My first suggestion is that the Party become more Africanised or Afrikanised, that the CPSA must pay special attention to S Africa, study the conditions in this country and concretise the demands of the toiling masses from first hand information, that we must speak the language of the Native masses and must know their demands. That while it must not lose its international allegiance, the Party must be Bolshevised, become South African not only theoretically, but in reality, it should be a Party working in the interests and for the toiling people in S Africa and not a party of a group of Europeans who are merely interested in European affairs."*

The book from which this text was taken ("South African Communists Speak", 1981) gives the following note below the "Cradock Letter":

*"The Independent African National Congress (Cape) had been formed in 1931 by Elliot Tonjeni and other left-wing members who had been driven out of the Cape ANC by the dictatorial action of the chairman 'Professor' Thaele. Tonjeni had been banished to the Eastern Cape by Justice Minister Pirow, and the Independent ANC drew most of its support from country branches in the region."*

Taken all together, the four pieces of writing in this part should provide a good outline of South African revolutionary history, and a good sampling of the South African revolutionary writing style.

- **The above is to introduce the original reading-texts: [Moses Kotane, 'Cradock Letter' to Johannesburg District Committee, 1934.](#)**
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[Govan Mbeki, 1910 - 2001](#)

## Govan Mbeki

The main item today is Chapter 7, “The New Offensive: The ANC after 1949”, from “The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa” by Govan Mbeki, published in 1992 (**attached**).

Right at the beginning of this chapter Mbeki recalls the joint ANC/CPSA protest against the Suppression of Communism Act on May Day, 1950, and the massacre of 18 people on that day by the National Party regime that had come to power in 1948. This is something South Africans should always remember on the May Day holiday each year.

Consequent to this massacre, 26 June 1950 was observed with a stay-away as Freedom Day.



Freedom Day was observed again when the Defiance of Unjust Laws campaign was launched in 1952, and again in 1955 when the [Freedom Charter](#) was adopted on that date at the Congress of the People in Kliptown.

Note that 26 June, our original Freedom Day, having to do with the protests against the banning of the Communist Party - is not a Public Holiday in free South Africa. But 24 September was made a public “Heritage Day” holiday at the insistence of the Inkatha Freedom Party (see [here](#)).

Govan Mbeki concludes this chapter with a very good section on the “Africanists”, in terms of events in which he himself, as he records, was involved in a major capacity. The first occasion was when the Africanists tried to hi-jack the ANC leadership from the Treason Trialists, taking advantage of the fact that the latter were locked up.

*“Black exclusivism,” says Mbeki, “presents a misguided solution”.*

*“What has characterised all groups that claimed to be opposed to government policies - groups that either broke away from the ANC like the PAC, or others like the Liberal Party, Unity Movement (NEUM), **Inkatha** and Black Consciousness Movement - has been that instead of opposing the government directly, **they have mounted campaigns aimed at thwarting those initiated by the ANC,**”* writes Mbeki, and proceeds to tell the whole Sharpeville story, when 69 people were shot, fifty years ago, on 21 March 1960; and then he relates the immediate aftermath.

*“At a meeting of the joint executives of the Congress Alliance in June 1961, the situation was reviewed and a decision was taken that in all future stay-at-homes, the possibility of the use of force could not be excluded,”* writes Mbeki

To read Govan Mbeki’s book on-line, [click here](#).

The question of armed struggle was settled by the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe on 16 December of that year, 1961. In tomorrow’s item we will see how O R Tambo, as the President-General of the ANC, reflected upon all this heritage in 1969, which was also the year of the ANC’s Morogoro Conference, where the original “[Strategy and Tactics](#)” document was adopted.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-texts: [Govan Mbeki, The Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, 1992, Chapter 7](#).



[Oliver Tambo, 1917 - 1993](#)

## Oliver Tambo

This thoroughly confident speech of O R Tambo's in December 1969 (**attached**) was made not long after the ANC's Conference in May of that year that had adopted the famous [Strategy and Tactics](#) document.

After the banning of the ANC in 1960, an equal or greater set-back had been the arrest of the top revolutionary leadership at Liliesleaf Farm, Rivonia, Johannesburg, on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1963, including Govan Mbeki who featured here yesterday.

The 1960s, we can see now, were far from being an interlude. What was laid down in those years is what was going to come to pass. It meant, in Tambo's words, that *"the enemy is headed for inevitable and ignominious defeat."*

The speech was broadcast on the anniversary of the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the “*new national army*” as Tambo called it.

Tambo’s typically broad historical sweep, in this short speech, includes an acknowledgement of PAIGC, the revolutionary liberation movement led at the time at the time by another author in this series, Amilcar Cabral, which was about to achieve a stunning victory.

The unbanning of the ANC and the return of Tambo to South Africa were not achieved until more than twenty years later. Yet it is easy to see why the ANC used to say in those years: “Victory is Certain!”

In the next and last item in this fifth part of our African Revolutionary Writers series we will see, through the eyes of Comrade Mzala (Jabulani Nxumalo), how the theory and practice of armed and political struggle drew inexorably towards its goal.

These four pieces of writing from “Africa’s Oldest Liberation Movement”, taken together, should leave no doubt as to the systematic and deliberate nature of the ANC’s project, and the all-round exemplary way in which it has been carried out, to date.

You can read more of O R Tambo’s speeches [here](#).

- **The above is to introduce the original reading-texts: [Oliver Tambo, Broadcast on the 8th Anniversary of Umkhonto we Sizwe, 1969](#).**
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Jabulani Nxumalo, 1955 - 1991

## Comrade Mzala

“Cooking the Rice Inside the Pot” (**attached**) by Comrade Mzala (Jabulani Nxumalo) was written in 1985, the year of the ANC’s Kabwe (Zambia) conference.

It is our final item in Part 5 of the African Revolutionary Writers series.

Sixteen years after the Morogoro conference, and nine years after the 1976 events in which Mzala himself took part, victory was clearly certain, yet the path still had to be understood and pressed forward with determination and vigour.

What Mzala shows, and this is even more clear when taken together with the writings of Moses Kotane, Govan Mbeki and Oliver Tambo that we have used in this series, is that the armed struggle initiated on 16 December 1961 was crucial.

Any criticism of the armed struggle as such, whether it concentrates on MK or on any particular operations, misses the point that is made crystal clear by Mzala. The rice was always going to be cooked inside the pot, i.e. inside the country. The armed struggle was the way back to the “pot”. Both by example as well as by direct contact, the adoption of armed struggle by the ANC (which was also a turning-away from “passive resistance”) was essential. If there had been contradiction between the liberation movement and the popular masses on this point, it could have been disastrous.

The point is made very strongly when Mzala quotes Che Guevara thus: “...*guerrilla warfare is war by the entire people against the reigning oppression. The guerrilla movement is their armed vanguard; the guerrilla army comprises all the people of a region or country.*”

Mzala even finds support for his argument from a “racist general”, writing in the Johannesburg “Star” in 1973, saying: *“The objective for both sides in a revolutionary war is the population itself . . . military tactics and hardware are all well and good, but they are really quite useless if the government has lost the confidence of the people among whom it is fighting.”*

Mzala, writing in anticipation of victory, is careful to note that the popular masses cannot be taken for granted, illustrating this caution by reference to the Spanish experience.

But for us, now looking at the armed struggle in retrospect, this text is a powerful reminder of its crucial necessity and the central part that it has played in South Africa’s liberation, to date.

Comrade Mzala was the author of the book “Gatsha Buthelezi - Chief with a Double Agenda”, published by Zed Books in 1988. An account of the attempted suppression of that book in South Africa from 1991 can be downloaded [here](#) (556 KB PDF).

There is a short biography of Jabulani Nxumalo on the SACP web site [here](#), and an obituary written shortly after his death by Brian Bunting, [here](#).

The Communist University’s “Mzala” archive is [here](#).

- The above is to introduce the original reading-texts: [Jabulani Nxumalo \(Comrade Mzala\) Cooking the Rice Inside the Pot, 1985](#).
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**Course: African Revolutionary Writers**

**20001, African Revolutionary Writers, Introductions Booklet 1 of 2**

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